

HEICS IV Project News

June, 2005

Hospital Emergency Incident Command System (HEICS) Moves Into the 21st Century

The Hospital Emergency Incident Command System (HEICS) is a well respected emergency management system that is widely used throughout the medical community nationally and internationally.

The Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) of California has launched a project to revise and update HEICS III. The last revision was done in 1998. This project is funded with monies allocated from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant awarded to the State of California. The *new* proposed completion date is **March 2006**.

The project mission statement is: To develop an all-hazards Incident Command/Management System for hospitals/healthcare organizations consistent with the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

The specific goals of this project are to revise and update HEICS III by:

- Revising and updating the HEICS III curriculum by bringing it into current emergency management standards and practices of the 21st century and making it consistent with the National Incident Management System (NIMS)
- Making HEICS IV a system to address all-hazards and incorporate Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) response considerations
- Making HEICS IV adaptable to rural and small hospitals
- Developing a process for instructor certification and credentialing
- Developing instructional and training curriculum

HEICS IV will be designed for hospitals and healthcare organizations, to manage incidents or events regardless of cause, size, or complexity. HEICS IV will promote interoperability and compatibility with local, state and federal response partners. It will include a core set of management concepts, response principles, standard terminology, and technologies related to the incident command system; and implementation of unified command. The structure will be applicable for the planning, response and recovery phases of an internal or external incident or emergency.

The EMSA has convened a twenty member national Work Group (WG) to review the existing HEICS III materials and make recommended changes. This panel of experts represents various operational entities of large, medium and small hospitals and healthcare organizations from throughout the United States. Also established is a Secondary Review Group (SRG) consisting of similar experts and experienced reviewers. Their mission is to provide feedback on the product(s) developed by the WG. In addition to both the WG and the SRG, an advisory body consisting of representatives from the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations, the American Hospital Association, and the NIMS Integration Center, will be active in the revision process.

Lists of both the WG and SRG may be viewed or downloaded from the following link:

<http://www.emsa.ca.gov/dms2/heics4project.asp>

Skip Skivington and Mitch Saruwatari from the **Kaiser Permanente National Headquarters** in California and Craig DeAtley PA-C from the **Washington Hospital Center** in Washington DC are under contract to lead the project while Cheri Hummel is the EMSA Project Manager. The EMSA is proud to sponsor this project and anticipates it will have a nationwide benefit once released.